



Resource Education and Information Transfer Overview

Introduction

Natural resource interpretation and education activities are common amongst units of the National Park System. Exhibits in nature centers or visitor centers, bird walks, and discovery hikes come to mind immediately. Generally these types of activities and forms of media are assigned to a park's Interpretive Division. However, natural resource managers and their cooperators have important roles to play in resource education efforts. They also have an obligation to transfer or share scientific information they are developing.

Natural resource managers have two broad objectives in this vein. These are to communicate information and messages on natural resource topics, issues, and management activities with the public, co-workers, affiliates, and partners and to advance the management, protection, and understanding of natural resources in parks and associated ecological communities.

Management Needs

Development of natural resource information through inventories, monitoring, and research is done principally for the purpose of resource preservation through informed decision making. Closure of the decision-making loop can only be achieved if deliberate steps are taken to get information into the hands of the Superintendent and members of the Park Management Team. The process of communicating this information is generally referred to as "Information Transfer". The park natural resources staff must be engaged in this task because resource information generally comes to them first and often it needs to be simplified and interpreted in order to achieve efficient and effective use and application.

Often natural resource information is valued by the general public in the context of improving better general understanding about park resources and equipping them with information that encourages preservation of park resources.

Current Activities

Regular communication of natural resource information occurs through a variety of mechanisms. These include such things as preparation and distribution of an annual Newsletter, preparation of Annual Progress and Final Project Reports, development of Fact Sheets, release of Natural Resource Activity Notices, and Nature Notes as well as posting material on the web.

Less regular communication occurs through employee training sessions and brown bag presentations, preparation and review of articles for The Overlook, presentations at professional and/or public meetings, technical reviews of interpretive media, and so forth.

Members of the Resource Management Division embrace the need for the transfer of scientific information to park decision-makers, interpretive and education staff, and the general public.



Natural Resources newsletter.